

URBAN DISTRICT OF BRENTWOOD

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR

1949

Urban District of Brentwood

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Chairman: COUNCILLOR H. J. FARROW, J.P.

Vice-Chairman: COUNCILLOR S. A. WILSON.

Councillors:

F. P. Brinkworth,	E. R. Hartley,
H. E. Brownnett,	D. S. Hewett (elected December,
V. H. Burton,	1949),
Rev. E. W. Byles, B.A., B.D.	J. Ffranco Jones, J.P.,
(Lond.), (resigned November,	T. W. Kenner,
1949),	H. J. Kirby,
D. Campbell,	Miss D. M. Landon (Vice-Chair-
A. V. Cave (Chairman of the	man of the Health Committee)
Health Committee),	J. R. Meadon,
A. H. Christey,	G. A. D. McTurk,
Mrs. A. W. Dell,	F. W. C. Salway,
E. R. D. de Rougemont, J.P.,	D. C. J. Scott,
P. W. Duck,	J. McC. Smith (elected Decem-
J. Durston,	ber, 1949),
S. B. Farrell,	W. H. Venner (died September,
G. C. Forbes,	1949),
P. W. Hammond,	R. H. Willard.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health (Part-time):

B. FRASER BEATSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H.

Bacteriologists and Analysts:

The Counties Public Health Laboratories.

Senior Sanitary Inspector:

F. G. SPENCER, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Food Inspector and Smoke Inspector, Royal Sanitary Institute's Certificate in Sanitary Science as applied to Buildings and Public Works.

First Additional Sanitary Inspector:

P. T. SHELTON, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Food Inspector, Royal Sanitary Institute, Royal Sanitary Institute's Certificate in Sanitary Science as applied to Buildings and Public Works

Second Additional Sanitary Inspector:

G. H. ROBERTS, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Food Inspector, Royal Sanitary Institute.

Clerks and Shorthand-Typists:

Miss C. F. CONNATTY.

Miss L. F. CLARK (resigned 19th February, 1949).

Miss A. WHITLEY (appointed 28th February, 1949).

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1949

To the Chairman and Members of the
Urban District Council of Brentwood.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report for the year 1949, drawn up as directed by the Minister of Health. This is the twentieth Annual Report which I have had the privilege of making to the Council.

During the year the health of the district has been well maintained. A notable event, to which reference is made in the appropriate section, was the absence of Diphtheria.

The Public Health Department functioned smoothly and satisfactorily, thanks to the ready co-operation and zeal of all my staff. I am indebted to the Senior Sanitary Inspector for his usual valuable aid in the compilation of this report.

Having entered the year in which I shall attain my majority as Medical Officer of Health of Brentwood, I desire to take this opportunity of thanking the Council for its continued support.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

B. FRASER BEATSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Area in Acres	18,166
Estimated Resident Population:	
(Civilian 29,580)	29,960
Number of inhabited houses	7,560
Rateable Value	£257,234
Sum represented by a penny rate	£1,006

Brentwood is partly urban and partly rural in character. Although close to London, it is fortunate in being situated outside the "green belt". Some of the worst features of extra-metropolitan development may, therefore, be avoided.

As is well known, the need of houses for the people is a pressing one. Coupled with the influence of an electrified railway line, it must inevitably accelerate urbanisation.

It is to be hoped, however, that vision in the preparation of housing sites will prevail. Although the Essex rural scene presents no grandeur of crag and torrent, it none the less possesses a quiet charm of its own. It must be for the good of its inhabitants to have space in which to think, and in which to contemplate nature unspoilt by the hand of atomic man.

VITAL STATISTICS (Calculated on the Resident Civilian Population)

Live Births

	Total.	M.	F.
Legitimate ...	423	215	208
Illegitimate ...	16	6	10

Table showing comparisons with England and Wales and with Smaller Towns having a population from 25,000 to 50,000.

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population for 1949:—

England and Wales	Smaller Towns	Brentwood U.D
16.7	18.0	14.84

Stillbirths

Total	M.	F.
11	3	8

Stillbirth Rate per 1,000 Total Births—24.44.

Deaths

Total	M.	F.
298	148	150

The Crude Death Rate per 1,000 of the population was 10.07.

The Registrar-General's Area Comparability Factor for 1949 was 0.91. By multiplying the Crude Death Rate by this figure a corrected rate which may be compared with the corrected rates of other districts is obtained.

The corrected rate for Brentwood Urban District is 9.16.

Table showing comparisons with England and Wales and with Smaller Towns having a population from 25,000 to 50,000.

Death Rate per 1,000 population for 1949:—

England and Wales	Smaller Towns		Brentwood U.D.	
11.7	11.6		9.16	
Deaths from Puerperal Causes	Nil
Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—				
All Infants per 1,000 live births	18.22
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	18.91
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	Nil
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	1
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	Nil
Deaths from Cancer and other Malignant Disease	43
Death Rate from Cancer and other Malignant Disease per 1,000 of the Estimated Population	1.45

Deaths at various ages:—

Age Groups			Number of Deaths		
			M.	F.	Total.
Under 1 year	...	...	5	2	7
1 and under 2	...	...	—	2	2
2 and under 5	...	...	—	1	1
5 and under 15	...	...	1	—	1
15 and under 25	...	...	1	2	3
25 and under 35	...	...	1	6	7
35 and under 45	...	...	2	9	11
45 and under 55	...	...	15	6	21
55 and under 65	...	...	33	15	48
65 and under 75	...	...	40	33	73
75 and upwards	...	...	50	74	124
			148	150	298

Causes of Death:—

Cause of Death			Number of Deaths		
			M.	F.	Total.
Whooping Cough	...	...	—	1	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	3	11	14

	M.	F.	Total
Syphilitic Disease ...	—	1	1
Influenza	—	1	1
Measles	—	1	1
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	—	1	1
Cancer	21	22	43
Diabetes	—	1	1
Intra-cranial Vascular			
Lesions	13	17	30
Heart Diseases	47	49	96
Other Diseases of the			
Circulatory System...	4	9	13
Bronchitis	11	3	14
Pneumonia	8	8	16
Other Respiratory Diseases	2	1	3
Appendicitis	1	—	1
Other Digestive Diseases	2	3	5
Nephritis	5	2	7
Premature Birth, Birth			
Injuries, etc.	6	3	9
Suicide	3	—	3
Road Traffic Accidents ...	2	1	3
Other Violent Causes ...	3	2	5
All other Causes	17	13	30
	148	150	298

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

National Health Service Act, 1946 — Local Health Services Under Part III

For the purpose of the above services the Urban District of Brentwood is included in the South Essex Health Area, the other two constituents being the Urban Districts of Hornchurch and of Thurrock. The Council is represented by three of its members on the Area Health Committee.

Laboratory Facilities

Routine examinations of milk, water, and ice-cream supplies were again carried out by the Counties Public Health Laboratories, 66, Victoria Street, London, S W.1.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE AREA

Water Supplies

Main water supplies to the area are provided principally by the South Essex Waterworks Company, and to a less extent by the Southend Waterworks Company. These supplies were satisfactory in both quality and quantity.

Six samples taken from the Southend Waterworks Company's mains showed the water to be clear and bright in appearance and of a high standard of bacterial purity, and suitable, therefore, for drinking and domestic purposes. This is a soft water.

Six samples taken from the South Essex Waterworks Company's mains showed the water to be clear and bright in appearance and of a high standard of bacterial purity and, therefore, suitable for drinking and domestic purposes. This is a relatively hard water.

The number of properties which obtain their water supply from standpipes has been further reduced, as during the year twelve houses were provided with a piped supply from the mains, and taps installed inside the houses.

Sanitary Inspection of Area

			Inspections		Re-Inspections
Housing Regulations	...	...	34	...	583
Housing (Overcrowding)		...	3	...	—
Allocation of Council Houses		...	4	...	1
Moveable Dwellings	...	...	25	...	40
Sanitary Defects	...	...	289	...	1,084
Verminous Premises	...	...	22	...	40
Dirty Premises	...	...	10	...	36
Infectious Diseases	...	...	38	...	32
Water Supplies	...	...	18	...	30
Drains—Inspected	...	...	65	...	105
—Tested	...	...	14	...	8
Sewers	...	...	2	...	3
Cesspools and Pail Closets	...	...	126	...	59
Factories—Power	...	...	48	...	19
—Non-Power	...	...	8	...	20
Outworkers' Premises	...	...	2	...	—
Bakehouses	...	...	14	...	3
Ponds, Ditches and Watercourses		...	44	...	34
Swine, Fowls, etc.	...	...	13	...	8
Accumulations of refuse	...	...	35	...	17
Refuse Tips, etc.	...	...	34	...	16
Requisitioned Property	...	...	2	...	1
Rats and Mice—General	...	...	103	...	228
—Sewers	...	...	4	...	7

Sanitary Inspection of Area (continued)				Inspections	Re-inspections
Miscellaneous Visits	...	...	280	...	15
Miscellaneous Interviews	...	...	100	...	2
Swimming Baths	...	...	2	...	—
Swimming Bath Samples	...	...	17	...	—
School Premises	...	...	2	...	—
Public Houses (Sanitary Conveniences)	...	...	48	...	29
Fair Grounds	...	...	5	...	—
Hairdressers Premises	...	...	10	...	—
Workplaces	...	...	3	...	—
Shops Act	...	...	—	...	1
				1,424	2,421

Food Inspection

Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	29
Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	143
Other Food Shops	...	...	...	...	133
Dairies and Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	27
Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	73
Knackers Yards	...	...	...	...	27
Cafes and Restaurants	...	...	...	...	121
Ice Cream Premises	...	...	...	...	82
Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	9

Food Sampling

Milk	...	...	...	...	58
Water	...	...	...	...	15
Ice-Cream	...	...	..	...	34

751

Number of Complaints received — 561.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

Food Poisoning

No fully authenticated cases of food poisoning occurred, but the following incident at a School was presumed to be due to this cause.

On Friday morning the 17th June, a report was received from Shenfield C.E. School that 80 persons, mostly children and including the Head Master, had been taken ill during the previous night with diarrhoea, and in some cases with vomiting as well. It was suggested that the school dinner eaten the previous day might be the cause.

Visits were accordingly made to the school and to the canteen. It was ascertained that over 200 persons had eaten the school dinner at one session. Of the 80 persons taken ill all but 15 were able to return to school on the Friday morning; the remaining 15, all children, were back at school on Monday morning. No one was apparently seriously ill.

The only remnant left over from the suspected meal was a small piece of Cornish Pasty which had been freshly cooked on Thursday morning. This was sent to the Laboratory for examination, and gave a negative result.

No Doctor in the district sent in any notifications of food poisoning. Though it seems likely that some mild form of poisoning was the cause of this illness there was insufficient evidence for a definite opinion.

MILK SAMPLING

Pasteurised Milk:

Number of Samples taken	...	...	22
Number of Samples satisfactory	...	...	20
(Two samples failed to satisfy the Methylene Blue Test).			

Undesignated Milk:

Number of Samples taken	...	...	36
Number of Samples satisfactory	...	...	27
(Six samples failed to pass the Coliform Test; one sample failed to pass the Coliform Test and also contained excessive numbers of bacteria; two samples contained excessive numbers of bacteria).			

Ice-Cream Sampling:

Number of Samples taken	...	...	34
Number of Samples satisfactory	27

Meat and Other Foods:

Number of Inspections	276
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Total weight of meat and other foodstuffs condemned:--

Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.	Lbs.
2	14	2	23 $\frac{3}{4}$

Knackers Yards:

Number of Premises.	...	...	...	1
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	27

HOUSING

1.	(a) Number of dwellinghouses inspected for housing defects (Under Public Health or Housing Acts)	289
	(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	1,990
2.	Number found not to be in all respects reasonably fit ...	166
3.	Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:	
	Number of defective dwellinghouses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or its officers	170
4.	Action under Statutory Powers during the year:	
	(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—	
	(1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	34
	(2) Number of dwellinghouses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—	
	(a) By Owners	32
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	5
	(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:—	
	(1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	+1
	(2) Number of dwellinghouses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—	
	(a) By Owners	3
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	—

+ (In addition to these, four notices were served under Section 75 of the Public Health Act, 1936, requiring provision of new dustbins).

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Notifiable Diseases.

There was a considerable rise in the total number of cases of notifiable diseases over the figure for the preceding year, due to the prevalence of Measles.

Acute Poliomyelitis and Acute Polioencephalitis.

When cases of Poliomyelitis began to be reported throughout the country in the late summer careful watch was kept in this district. The first notification of Poliomyelitis was not received until the

10th October. Thereafter at intervals fifteen further cases of Poliomyelitis, and one case of Polioencephalitis occurred during the following three months. Unhappily one young married woman died of the disease.

School closure was not considered necessary at any time, but house contacts were excluded, and daily visits were made to schools in which a case had occurred. Advice to parents was published in the local press, and the Saturday Children's Matinée at the Odeon Cinema was cancelled for several weeks at the height of the outbreak.

Of a total of seventeen cases five were adults.

IMMUNITY

(a) Diphtheria

For the first time during my tenure of office, and as far as I know in the history of Brentwood, not a single case of Diphtheria was notified during the year. Thus after thirteen years the enlightened policy of the Council, whereby immunisation against this dangerous disease was introduced in 1936, comes to full fruition.

In congratulating ourselves on this happy result it should not be forgotten that congratulations are also due to the parents of Brentwood, without whose co-operation such success could not have been attained.

As I pointed out last year responsibility for Diphtheria immunisation now falls on the Local Health Authority or, in other words, the County Council. While I am still giving the necessary injections to children at the Clinic, the administrative side of the work was removed from my office to the Area Medical office during 1949.

It is to be hoped that the campaign to secure the immunisation of every child will be fought unceasingly.

(b) Smallpox

Infants are occasionally sent to me by the Area Medical Officer for vaccination at the Clinic. Their rarity invites attention to the steady general decline in the immunisation of the population of this country against Smallpox.

Provision was made in the National Health Service Act for the abolition of the compulsory vaccination of infants, which was already all too easily evaded. In my view the opportunity should have been seized to tighten up the regulations so as to make evasion increasingly difficult. Events immediately prior to the date of this report point the moral. An unvaccinated population is a population unprotected against a deadly and highly infectious disease.

As the level of immunity of the people is allowed to fall year by year so must the day of reckoning make its inexorable approach.

MISCELLANEOUS

Swimming Pools

The following samples were taken from Swimming Pools and submitted to bacteriological and chemical examinations:—

			Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Brentwood Urban District Council	...	8	...	1
Ursuline High School	... ..	2	...	—
Brentwood School	... ..	3	...	—
County High School for Girls	... ..	3	...	—
		16	...	1

Factories Act, 1937.

			Number of			Notices
		Inspections	Notices served			complied
1. <i>Inspections.</i>						
Premises						
Factories (Power)	... 67	...	3	...	2	
Factories (Non-Power)	28	...	2	...	2	
2. <i>Defects Found.</i>						
Particulars						
			Found		Remedied	
Lack of Cleanliness	... ..	...	1	...	1	
Defective Sanitary Accommodation	...	...	3	...	2	
Insufficient Sanitary Accommodation	...	...	1	...	1	
Defective Floors	... ..	...	—	...	—
3. <i>Outworkers.</i>						
Number of Outworkers	... ..	...	...	...	12	
Number of Inspections	... ..	...	...	...	2	

